TOM THUMB
No. 3000 H
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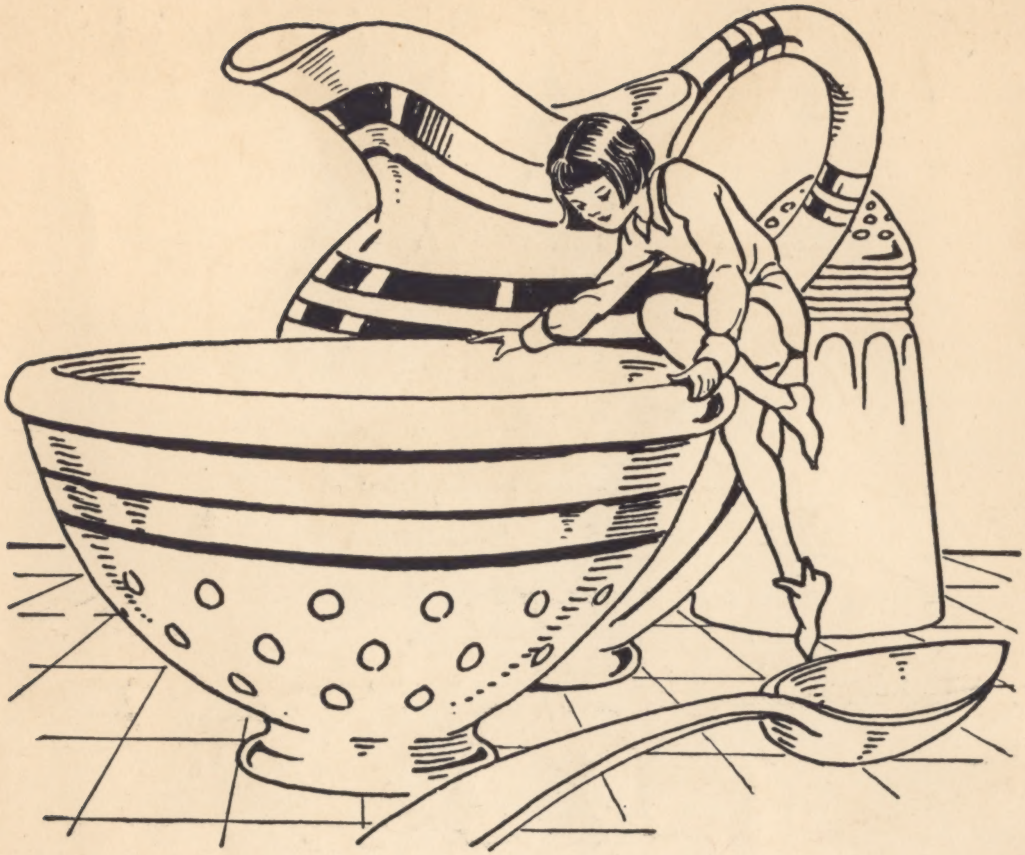

TOM THUMB

A long time ago there lived a poor farmer and his wife and they had a little boy, who was strong and healthy, but who was no bigger than your thumb. Because of his tiny size, they called him Tom Thumb.

One day Tom's mother was making a pudding and to see how she mixed it, he climbed upon the edge of the bowl. His foot slipped and he fell into the batter. His mother not noticing this, stirred him into the pudding and put it into the oven.

Tom soon grew hotter and hotter, until he could stand it no

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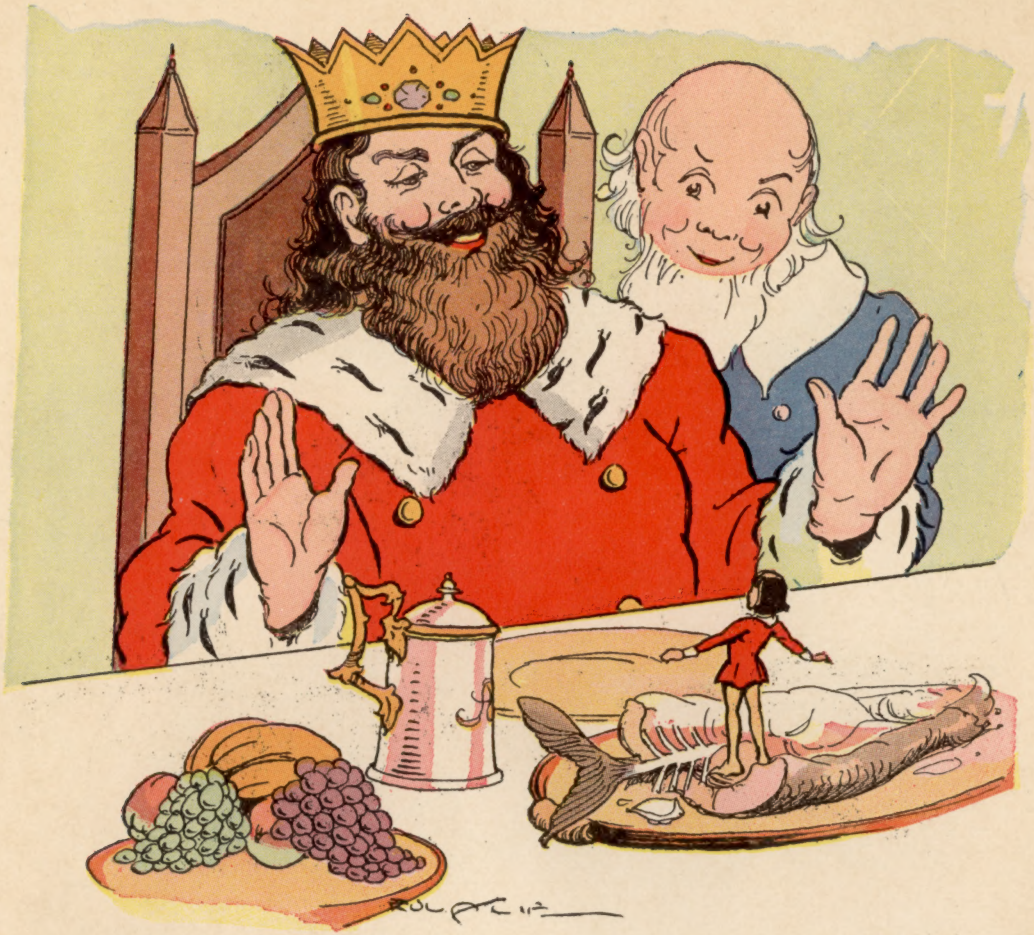
longer, and began to yell and jump up and down. When Tom's mother saw the pudding behave in such a strange manner, she thought it was bewitched, and flung it out of the window.

The pudding being broken to pieces by the fall, Tom was released and walked home to his mother, who gave him a kiss and put him to bed.

Another time, Tom's father made him a whip of barley straw to drive the cattle with. One day while driving the cattle he slipped into a ditch. A crow seeing him swooped down and picked him up and flew with him, to the top of a giant's castle, where he left him.



The giant saw him and picked him up and put him in his mouth to eat him. Tom tickled his tongue so, that the giant took him out and threw him into the river. A large fish then swallowed Tom. The fish was soon caught for the table of King Arthur. When it was cut open, there was Tom. Everybody was delighted with the little fellow. King Arthur liked him so much that he made him his dwarf and Tom became the favorite of the whole court.

Once, when Tom was visiting his father and mother, they gave him a hazel-nut to eat. Now a hazel-nut should have lasted Tom for a week, but he ate it all in one day and was very ill.

Tom had always been a favorite of the Queen of Fairyland. When she heard that he was ill, she came in a chariot drawn by winged mice and took Tom with her to make him well.

When he was well again, she dressed him in a velvet suit, and calling the wind asked it to carry him back to King Arthur's Court. Just as Tom was about to land in the courtyard of the palace, the cook passed with a bowl of hot milk for the King. Poor Tom fell plump into the middle of it and it splashed into the cook's eyes. Down went the bowl to the ground.

The cook, who was a cross fellow, swore to the King that Tom had done it out of mischief. So Tom was tried and sentenced to be put in jail.

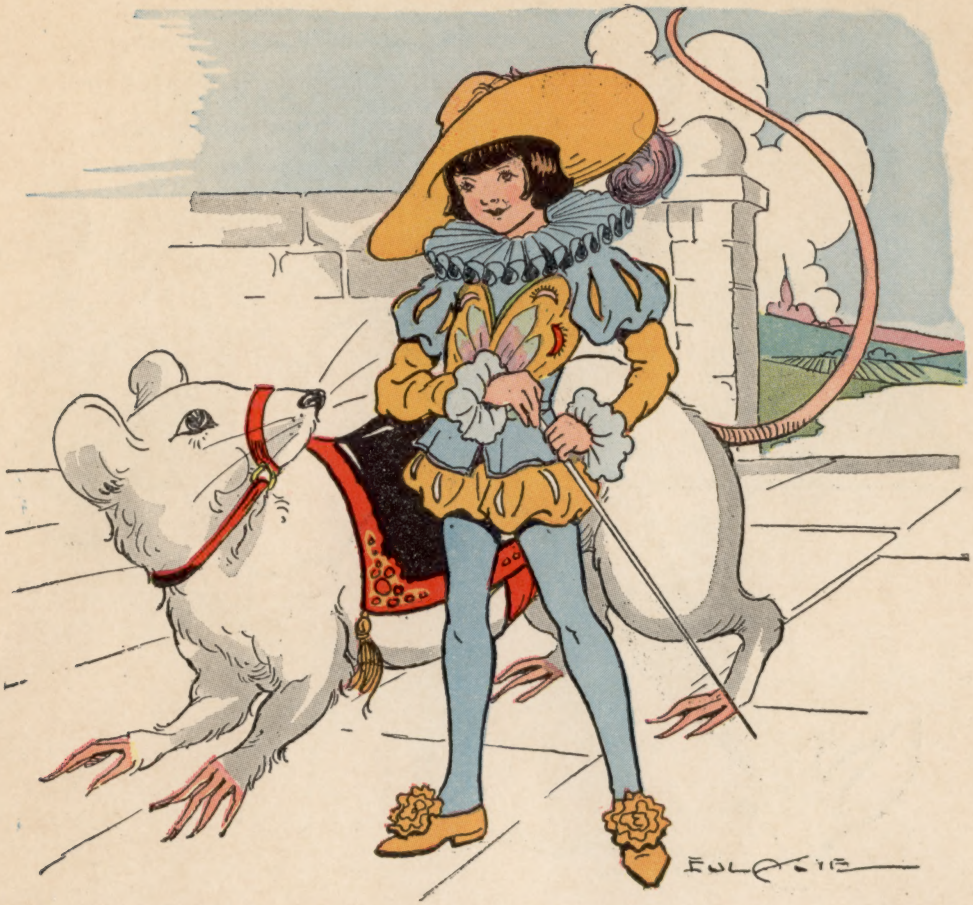
When the little fellow heard this he felt very bad. With one spring he jumped down the throat of a miller who stood by. Tom being lost, the court broke up and the miller went back to his mill. But when he got there, Tom did not leave him long at rest. He began to roll and tumble about so, that the miller soon had to have a doctor.

When the doctor came, Tom began to dance and sing and the

doctor was as much frightened as the miller was. He sent in great haste for six more doctors.

While all these doctors were talking about what they should do, the miller yawned and Tom gave a jump and landed in the middle of the table. Then he turned around and made a low bow to each.

The miller was very angry and ran with him to the King. The King, being very busy with state affairs, said that he should be brought another day. The miller put Tom into a mouse-trap to keep him safe.



When Tom finally came before the King, he forgave him for upsetting the milk and ordered new clothes for him and also knighted Tom. The clothes were made of butterfly wings. Tom looked so fine that he decided to go hunting. His sword was a needle and his steed a mouse.

As they rode by a farmhouse a cat came from behind a door and would have gobbled up the mouse but for Tom, who drew his sword and saved the mouse. Poor Tom was badly scratched and his clothes were torn by the cat's claws. He was carried back to the palace and laid on a little bed of down.

When Tom was well again, the King ordered a tiny gold palace to be made for him, a tiny chair and a tiny coach drawn by six mice.

This made the Queen very angry because she wanted a new coach, so she decided to ruin Tom. She complained to the King that Tom had been very rude to her. This made the King very angry and he sent for Tom. To escape, Tom crept into an empty shell and there he hid until he was almost starved. At last one bright morning, a beautiful butterfly settled on the ground near him and he crept out of the shell, onto the butterfly's back.

The butterfly flew from field to field and from tree to tree and at last came to the King's court. There the whole court tried to catch him, until Tom slipped from his back and fell into a watering-can, in which he was almost drowned.

The Queen said his head should be cut off and while they were getting ready to do it, he was put once more into a mouse trap. The cat seeing something move and thinking it to be a mouse, patted the trap till she broke it and set Tom free.

Afterwards the King, who missed his favorite, pardoned him

again, but Tom did not live very long to enjoy the King's favor. He was always ready to help others in trouble. One day, after trying to rescue a fly from a spider's web, the spider attacked him fiercely and he was so badly wounded that he died.

The King and his court missed the cheerful little fellow.

In his memory they erected a beautiful monument, on which was recorded all the wonderful rescues and brave deeds of Tom Thumb.

TOM THUMB

Here's Tom Thumb waving hat in air
He rides upon a rat.

He wears a ruff about his neck
And feather in his hat.

He looks so very happy
With smile upon his face,

How would you like to ride a rat
And challenge him to race?